

VZCZCXYZ0023
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBU #0798 1141807
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 241807Z APR 07
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7941
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL//SCJ2//
RULGPIA/USCOMSOLANT

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 000798

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,
WHA/EPSC
CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; VIRGINIA TECH MASSACRE; ECUADOR 04/24/07;
BUENOS AIRES

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Leading international editorials cover the Virginia Tech University massacre and the flare-up of the debate over arms control; and chances of an institutional change in Ecuador.

2. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "Massacre and arms control"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" (04/24) editorializes "Just a few days after the tragedy at Virginia Tech University..., the debate over arms control is again the focus of social debate. More than 30,000 people die every year in the US due to gun violence.

"... The question is whether it is advisable or not to set restrictions on citizens' right to purchase and carry weapons. In the US, everyone has the constitutional right to self defense and this is why arms sales is one of the most profitable businesses in the country since the beginning of the 20th century.

"... Those who favor more arms control point out that the availability of weapons facilitates the commission of crimes anywhere, including schools and universities. The debate is periodically re-opened, particularly when riots occur at teaching centers...

"... Serious events like the massacre at Virginia Tech University should leave lessons for the future, even in our country. This is why we hope that this horrible massacre will contribute to establishing more rigorous control on the right of citizens to carry weapons."

- "Ecuador vis-`-vis institutional change"

Leading "Clarín" editorializes (04/24) "Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa seems willing to use the broad support he obtained to introduce substantial changes in institutions. His landslide victory in the referendum to call a constitutional convention marks the existence of a new inherent coalition, which includes vast social sectors led by the president.

"In this way, Correa could break the chronic lack of governance that has prevented his predecessors from ending their terms in office. But, more than this, his proposal for substantial reform is also aimed at changing the rules governing the relationship between social sectors and economic players to allow for more state intervention in a dollarized economy with a 40-percent-poverty rate and high inequality.

"In this way, Ecuador could start to overcome its typical

instability and political polarization.

"... The challenge ahead for the Ecuadorian democracy is to build a new political system that will overcome the failings of the previous ones without falling into hegemonic attitudes that could impair minority rights."

To see more Buenos Aires reporting, visit our
classified website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires>

WAYNE